



MARCH 2022

Connecting the DOTs

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Celebrating 2022 Graduates



Kyanne Beck is a 2022 graduate of T.F. Riggs High School in Pierre. She is the daughter of **Kellie Beck, Director of Finance and Management (Central Office).**

Is your family celebrating a high school or college graduation this year?

The May Connecting the DOTs newsletter will feature a special graduation photo section and a link to a video collage.

Highlight your special 2022 graduate by sending the following information to julie.stevenson@state.sd.us by Friday, April 29:

1. Photo with graduate's name
2. Name and city of high school or college graduating from
3. Share future plans as you would like
4. Your name/ DOT position and relationship to the grad

SDDOT Mission: To efficiently provide a safe and effective public transportation system

SDDOT Vision: Better lives through better transportation by being the best



The Secretary's Corner

Please take a moment to consider the active role you play each day to help us earn such high customer satisfaction remarks from the people we serve. I am very proud of our entire SDDOT team across the state!

Customer Satisfaction Survey:

Chris Tatham from the ETC Institute recently provided the preliminary findings of the 2021 customer satisfaction survey. A full report will be provided soon. The SDDOT commissioned this statewide customer satisfaction survey to determine short and long-term transportation priorities. The survey results are used to objectively assess how well we meet the state's transportation needs and to identify how we can continually improve the quality of our services.

Find the presentation recording on our Intranet site at <https://intranetdot.sd.gov/> or at https://statesd.zoom.us/rec/share/YNwWjW2rQ_ITBVjQ0cTyCzMyCR1oxTlKmlMqIMJagtJy_UQuiTb5c3BEHDBZm1K8.NGLqDC_Dxuff0FOO

Please manually type in (not copy/paste) the passcode: 0PqYJa?f

Culture of Innovation:

SDDOT and other DOTs across the nation have invested time and financial resources to foster an innovative culture through the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Report 885. This guide for "Creating and Sustaining a Culture of Innovation for Departments of Transportation" focuses on how leadership, empowerment, communication, recognition, and measurement all play a critical role in the culture of innovation.

Please take a few minutes to complete the survey to help provide a "benchmark" for our culture of innovation as we continue on our path toward excellence.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=fFSvcKtpbUG0plQ7XOUrmfoui3pVw9MnNea17vMlSdUQzdEMTVLWFdTRkRFVlU1U1dWVlhWRk83Ty4u>

Please complete the survey by Thursday, March 31, 2022.

Legislative Update:

During the final week of session, the legislators passed the general appropriations bill which includes the overall salary package for State employees for SFY2023 starting July 1, 2022. This bill provides an across-the-board 6% increase for eligible state employees. More information will be coming on the overall results of the legislative session after the final legislative day on March 28, 2022.

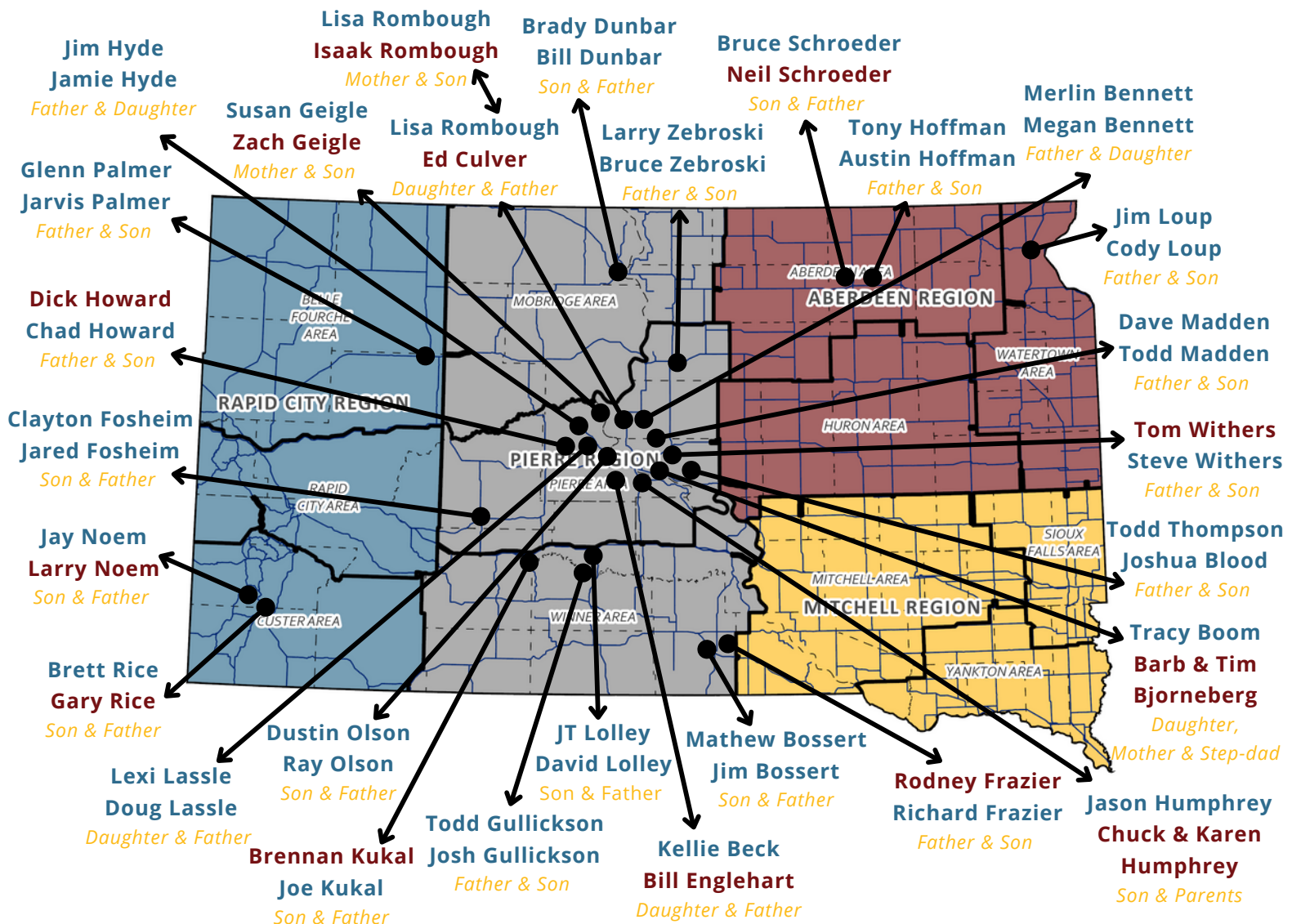
Generational Knowledge

Decades of SDDOT Experience

For many of our colleagues, SDDOT has been the career choice among multiple generations. Positive SDDOT work experiences prompt future generations to seek education and experience to pursue a career within the SDDOT.

We appreciate this generational story idea that was given through the Connecting the DOTs newsletter survey! Due to the outpouring of responses; we will continue to highlight SDDOT generational family connecting points in upcoming newsletters.

Map Key: Current DOT employees are in blue text. Former DOT employees are in red text; and the relationship is noted in yellow. Arrows indicate the general area which the employees work/worked.



If you have information for this multi-part series, please email: bret.mattice@state.sd.us






UAS Program Development

By Larry Dean, Planning Data Manager, Project Development


The South Dakota Department of Transportation and South Dakota Local Transportation Assistance Program, in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration, will be hosting a virtual Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) Workshop on April 20-21, 2022.

A flyer outlining the workshop is below. Find additional information (agenda, promotional flyer, and registration) on our SDDOT home page at <https://dot.sd.gov/> in the **Featured Resources** section. If you have any questions concerning the workshop, please email larry.dean@state.sd.us.

YOU'RE INVITED: April 20 and 21, 2022
[Register Now](#)

SOUTH DAKOTA UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS WORKSHOP



About the Workshop

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), as part of its ongoing Every Day Counts Round 5 (EDC-5) initiative, along with the South Dakota Department of Transportation and the South Dakota Local Technical Assistance Program are offering a two-day interactive workshop on Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS).

Attendees will hear from subject matter experts on:

- Starting and growing a UAS program
- Implementing UAS technology in support of key transportation applications
- Technology and UAS use case examples

Participants will have the opportunity to attend a breakout session on one of five transportation applications. The sessions will focus on the following topics:

Session 1: Pre-Construction

- Project Scoping, Surveying

Session 2: Structural Inspection

- Supplementing Bridge Inspections, Overhead Signs

Session 3: Construction Inspection

- Work Zone Traffic Monitoring, Construction Quantities

**Session 4: Emergency Response/
Cold Weather Operations**

- Flooding Events, Landslides/Rock Falls, Extreme Condition Operations

Session 5: Tribal Transportation Program Management

When is the Workshop?

This two-day virtual workshop will feature general sessions on the first day. Day two will include five separate breakout sessions on different transportation applications.

Day 1: April 20, 2022, 9:00AM - 2:30PM
 Day 2: April 21, 2022, 9:00AM - 12:30PM

Who Should Attend?

This strategic and timely workshop will benefit a wide range of participants:

- State, City, County and Tribal staff
- Emergency and incident management personnel
- Field personnel - communications, operations, maintenance, construction, consultants, contractors


How Do I Participate?

The workshop is free of charge, but requires online advance registration.

Register Now: <https://sdstate.zoom.us/j/2qr70uHdNB0km3zsfIMCKnEn0SR2G>

Questions?

Contact: Larry Dean, South Dakota Department of Transportation (larry.dean@state.sd.us)



Attendees are eligible for **Professional Development Hours (PDH)**.



SDDOT Employees and Construction Industry Professionals Discuss the Future at AGC-SDDOT Summit



Craig Smith giving welcome remarks



Crowd at the Summit



Mike Behm discussing the Infrastructure Bill

With the fast-paced nature of the construction industry, working to continually improve processes and be on the forefront of best practices is critical for the SDDOT. There is no better way to continually improve than collaborate with our partners in the industry and the 2022 AGC-SDDOT Construction Industry Summit is a prime example of this.

SDDOT employees and contractors from around the state convened in Oacoma for two days, beginning Wednesday, March 9, 2022. SDDOT Director of Operations, Craig Smith, kicked off the conference with welcome remarks and then introduced a virtual presentation by Ken Simonson, Chief Economist from AGC of America. Simonson's presentation was particularly timely with the various supply chain issues recently affecting the industry and measuring the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on construction activities in our state.

The first day of the Summit was concluded with a knowledgeable discussion on the Infrastructure Bill by Mike Behm, SDDOT Director of Planning and Engineering, DOT updates from several employees, an update on workforce development by AGC, and Street Smart presenting on integrated work zones.

Day two of the conference had a common theme focused on the future of construction and what is on the horizon for the SDDOT and contractors alike. Multiple SDDOT employees presented information on day two, including: Jon Suomala, Brad Norrid, Rick Gordon, Jason Humphrey, Steve Palmer, Damon Zeltinger, Caleb Horstman, Jay Peppel, Scott Rabern, and Brandon Riss. With topics ranging from e-construction to implementing digital 3-D models, the presentations were engaging and pertinent to the challenges faced in modern road construction.

2022 Airports Conference

**The annual SD Airports Conference will take place on April 6-7, 2022
at the Ramkota Hotel in Pierre.**

This conference is designed for airport managers, finance officers, mayors and other city/county personnel to learn more about how to better run their local airport. Many consultants and aviation vendors will also be in attendance as this conference is a great networking opportunity for everyone.

There will be various presentations from engineering firms, Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) just to name a few. The speaking topics include Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), pavement maintenance and improvements, updates in federal legislation/funding and other topics.

The highlight of the conference will be our Keynote speaker, John Mollison, who is an artist, writer and filmmaker. His work involves interviewing war veterans and telling their stories regarding aviation during wartime and draws pictures of the aircraft used by those veterans.

Find additional information (agenda, registration, etc.) on our website at:

https://dot.sd.gov/transportation/aviation/airport-conference#listItemLink_0

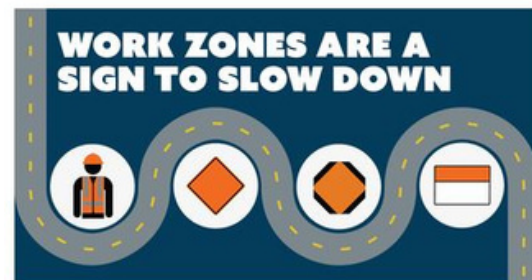


National Work Zone Awareness info

National Event Days:

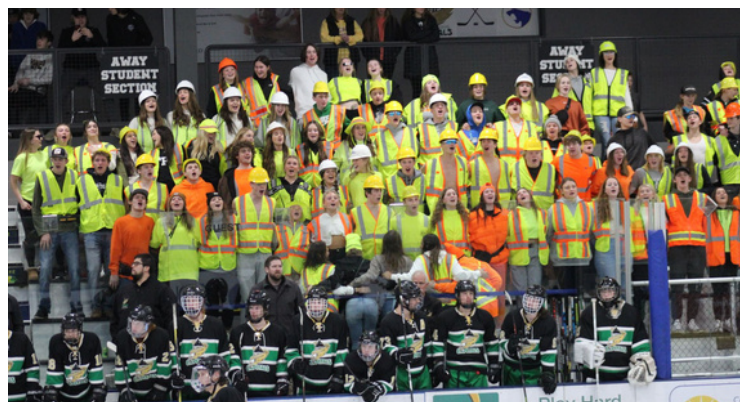
- Monday, April 11 — Work Zone Safety Training Day
- Tuesday, April 12 — National kickoff event
- Wednesday, April 13 — Go Orange Day
- Thursday, April 14 — Social media storm
- Friday, April 15 — Moment of Silence

This is new for 2022 to remember the people who lost their lives in a work zone incident.



How can SDDOT staff members participate in NWZA to support SDDOT team members?

1. Brainstorm creative photo ideas with your department/office for **"Go Orange Day"** on April 13. (Pictured are **Oahe Capitals fans** supporting "construction awareness" at the state varsity tourney!)



Send your group's **"Going Orange"** photo to Taylor.Brusven@state.sd.us by Friday, April 8. Photos will be displayed on our website and social media!

2. Share this vital safety message internally and externally while on daily TEAMS calls by using this uniquely designed SDDOT background!

TEAMS and ZOOM Background Template



Access this TEAMS background image at <M:\DOT\Common\DOTPictures&Logos\Teams Backgrounds\National Work Zone Awareness Week>

3. As part of the awareness campaign, SDDOT "re-created" construction themed coloring sheets, crossword puzzles, and word finds for families and classrooms. (Anyone remember the "old" **What Color is Orange** kids' activity booklets?)

Materials are available to the public at <https://dot.sd.gov/inside-sddot/of-interest/work-zone-awareness-week>

Line it Up!

Connect the dots to form the highway flagger symbol, then color the outline in.

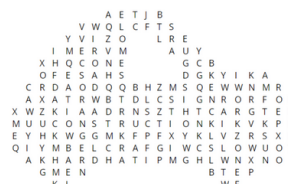
This symbol appears on signs that tell you there is a flagger ahead.



Word Search!

Find all of the road construction themed words.

Words are hidden horizontal, vertical, and diagonal.



Words to Find:

Orange
Workzone
Slow
Cone

Truck
Car
Road
Hardhat

Worker
Sign
Construction
Flagger





PROCESSES

NHI 130078: Fracture Critical Inspection Techniques for Steel Bridges

May 3-6 | 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. | Sioux Falls



ASSETS

NHI 130126 Strut & Tie Modeling for Concrete Structures

April 5-6 | 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. | Pierre

High Strength Structural Bolting Workshop

May 3-4 | 8:00 am – 5 p.m. | Pierre

NHI 135046: Stream Stability & Scour at Highway Bridges

May 10-12 | 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. | Pierre



WORKFORCE

TLN: Stress Mastery

March 29 | 9:30 – 11 a.m. | Zoom

TLN: Transition to Supervisor

April 6-7 | 12:30 – 4:00 pm; 9 a.m. - noon | Zoom

New Employee Orientation

May 17-18 | Noon to 5 p.m. and 8 a.m. to Noon | Fort Pierre



SERVICE

TLN: Quality – What is it and how to we Achieve it?

April 13 | 9:30 – 11 a.m. | Zoom

TLN: Think Outside the Building – Innovating Your Future

April 26 | 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. | Zoom

New Classes on the LMS:

Truck or Trailer Mounted Attenuators (TMAs)| AFE 71J2: Truck- or trailer-mounted attenuators (TMAs) are an energy-absorbing device attached to the rear of work and/or shadow vehicles to reduce the severity of rear-end crashes from errant vehicles. This course will cover the basics of what a TMA is and how they are used in SDDOT maintenance operations. Maintenance crews will understand how TMAs will help keep them safe when working on our highways, and the recommended best practices.

DOT Incident Investigation | AFE 78B2: This course walks you through the steps on how to properly complete an Incident Investigation using SDDOT Safety Investigation Form #304.

Featured Classes on the LMS:

Overcome Stressful Situations at Work Playlist | 8 classes | AFE 7621: Work-related stress is a leading cause of burnout among employees. Modern techniques on dealing with stress can help employees persevere through challenging situations. In this playlist, learners will focus on grit, resilience, and perseverance to overcome stressful situations at work.

Communication Playlist | 10 items | AFE 7606: This playlist offers courses, e-Learning, and articles to help employees listen attentively to others and clearly convey information and ideas.

Popular Classes on the LMS:

Underground Storage Tank | AFE 7849 | Participants will learn the approved inspections and timeframe for inspections and routine maintenance requirements to properly maintain DOT owned fuel islands and meet local, state, and federal requirements.

March Mentoring Minute

Driving the Mentoring Relationship Communication



by Kim Wheeler

I will never forget my first meeting with my first formal mentor. To set the scene, I was new in my career, new to my organization, and new to participating in a formal mentoring program. Painfully aware of my overall lack of experience, I arrived at the meeting expecting my mentor to tell me what to do. I sat across from him, notepad open, pen poised, ready to write down all the wise things I was sure he would say. So, imagine my surprise when it turned out that he had not prepared a lecture or even a list of things we should discuss. Furthermore, he had no intention of doling out wisdom or the secrets to success. Instead, he wanted me to do the talking. He wanted me to tell him what I needed to work on, what I intended to get out of our partnership, and how I envisioned achieving my goals. I was dumbfounded. I was the wide-eyed new mentee, and he was the seasoned expert—shouldn't he be taking charge?

My initial naivete about mentoring roles is all too common among new mentees, who often come to the partnership with either a conscious or subconscious expectation that their more experienced mentor will take the reins and drive the relationship. To dispel this misconception of the mentor's role, we need to look no further than the definition of a mentor: A mentor is defined as an experienced and trusted adviser. Mentors use their expertise and knowledge to advise and support—not to direct, decide, or do. If a mentor is directing outcomes, they inadvertently defeat the purpose of mentoring, which is to help mentees learn to lead themselves.

Thus, for effective mentoring to take place, the onus for driving the relationship must remain with the mentee, with the mentor seated firmly in a supportive role. Here are some things mentees can do (or mentors can encourage them to do) to take initiative and responsibility for building and maintaining mentoring momentum.

- **Define goals and expectations.** Chances are, if a person signs up for a formal mentoring program, they have at least some idea of what they hope to gain from it. Mentees should commit time to reflecting not only on specific objectives they would like to achieve, but also their reasons for those objectives and how they hope the mentor will be able to help. This introspection will enable mentees to clearly articulate their goals and expectations and prepare them for larger conversations with their mentor about their partnership and the Mentoring Action Plan.

continued . . .



- **Initiate meetings and discussions.** A mentoring pair's first meeting should include a discussion of how much time they would like to commit to the partnership and how often they would like to meet. Once these parameters are established, the mentee is responsible for initiating meetings and discussions. This could be as simple as sending a recurring calendar invite or creating a calendar reminder to reach out after certain events or milestones. Another best practice is to end each meeting by answering the question, "When should we meet again?"
- **Come prepared.** Mentees who make the most of their mentoring experience will come to meetings with clear goals ("Today, I would like to accomplish..."), a list of topics or questions to discuss, and their own ideas or solutions for which to seek feedback from their mentor. They won't show up unprepared expecting their mentor to do the work for them or tell them what to do, but rather will take the initiative to identify their own thoughts and ideas and arrive ready to ask for feedback, advice, and new perspectives to help them decide their next steps.
- **Take initiative.** Mentees sometimes comment that they wish their mentor would reach out more often or suggest more learning activities. However, these mentees may not have communicated their expectations to their mentor nor taken any action to resolve the issue for themselves. Have they increased their own outreach or researched and suggested additional learning activities to their mentor? The most successful mentees are those who take initiative rather than waiting for someone else to intuit what they would like or make it happen for them.
- **Follow through.** Mentees can drive the relationship forward and keep the partnership on track with one simple behavior: following through. By doing what they say they will do when they say they will do it, mentees demonstrate that they are serious about their goals and value their mentor's time.

Make Time for Mentoring!

This article was reprinted with permission from *The Training Connection*.

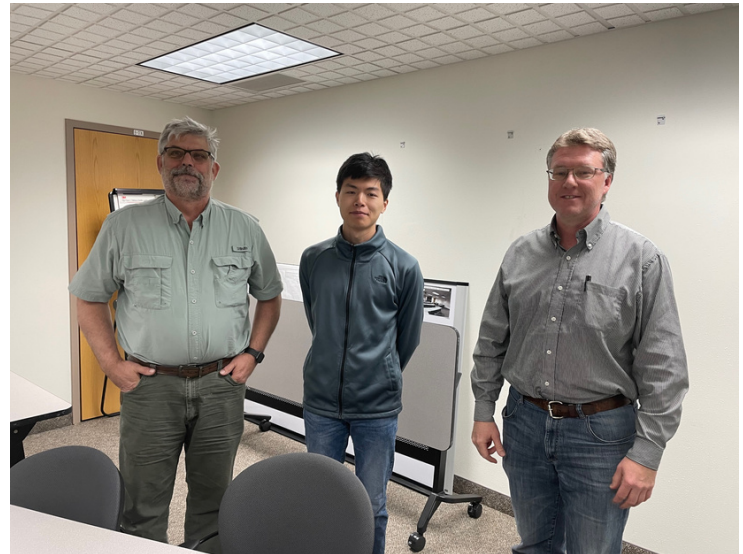
Media/Public Engagement Training In Pierre

Thanks to everyone who participated in the media/public engagement trainings held in Pierre in March. If you are interested in hosting a media/public engagement training on site for staff in your department (or area), contact the training or communications teams!



Media Training Continued:

Jon Nelson-Land Surveyor (Pierre), John Fogelsang-Engineering Manager (Pierre), and Bruce Schroeder - Aberdeen Area Engineer had the "opportunity" to practice giving their interview via Teams!





Legislative Tour

In March, members of the House and Senate Transportation Committees participated in a tour of the Pierre/Ft. Pierre Bridge construction project.

The legislative group was able to see the contractor driving pile as well as view the permanent and temporary casings for one of the drilled shafts. Legislators were able to see some of the elements that have already been constructed on the Fort Pierre side. In addition, we had the Pierre Area named snowplows Lewis and Clark and Snow Problemo on site; as well as the Roadway Evaluation System (i.e. spider van).

Pictured with **Dean VanDeWiele, Pierre Area Engineer, Jason Humphrey, Pierre Region Engineer and Secretary Jundt** are Rep. Dean Wink, Rep. Rocky Blare, Rep. Caleb Finck - House Transportation Committee Chair, Sen. Mary Duvall – Senate Transportation Committee Chair, and Rep. Larry Tidemann



In sympathy with our SDDOT teammates across the state . . .



Our Sympathy to **Patty Thompson, Central Office**, on the passing of her sister Catherine Ann Curtin.

Catherine's funeral was held in Rapid City in February with a graveside service at Black Hills National Cemetery.



Our Sympathy to **Doug Sherman, Winner Area Engineer**, on the passing of his father-in-law, Leonard Prins. Leonard passed away in early March.

Leonard's funeral was held in Clear Lake. Burial with military honors was at the Lakeview Cemetery in Clear Lake.



Our Sympathy to **Darin Hodges, Central Office**, on the recent passing of his father, Neil Hodges.

Neil's memorial service and graveside service were held in Sturgis. A celebration of life was also held in Mesa, AZ.



Vernon "Skip" VanDerhule

An enthusiastic supporter of all things regarding aviation. Skip served on the South Dakota Aeronautics Commission for 13 years, and three of those years acted as chairperson. While on that commission, he advocated for improvements in airport infrastructure such as lighting and pavement planning. He enjoyed facilitating communication between South Dakota leaders and officials in Washington D.C. to help secure funding for several airports.

SDDOT Employee News and Updates. . .

March Longevity:

Tom Horan, Operations Engineer – 35 years (Rapid City Region)

Jeff Gustafson, Operations Engineer – 35 years (Mitchell Region)



Below is a link to a video of **Eric Stroeder** receiving his **House Commemoration for Outstanding School Board Member** in late February.

<https://fb.watch/boHVmbyBmZ/>

Eric is a Engineering Supervisor in the Mobridge Area.



Meet William Michael Paul.

Nathan Paul, Specifications Engineer in Operations Support based out of the Sioux Falls Area Complex, and his wife Jen welcomed a new baby boy (**William**) on March 15, 2022.

Nathan provided this photo of his "little Red Sox buddy"!



Meet Jack Nicholas Boese.

Jack was born on Feb. 28, 2022. He weighed in at 8 lbs. 15 oz. and was 19.5 inches long.

Jack is the son of Hailey and Nick Boese. Hailey is a Project Engineer for the Winner Area.

Mobridge Area - Snowplow Contest Winner

Drift Dominator put in numerous hours keeping our South Dakota roadways safe this winter, near Herreid.

Brandee Fjeldheim, who submitted the winning name, was able to meet her plow in March. Brandee is pictured with **Herreid Highway Maintenance Worker, Steve Deibert.**



SDDOT Employee News and Updates . . .

New Hires:

Cheyenne Wiedrich, Structural CAD Tech (Pierre)

Promotions and Lateral Position Changes:

Logan Gran, Active Transportation Engineer (Sioux Falls)

Cody Asher, Survey Crew Chief/Chief Driller (Pierre)

Dale Adams, Project Technician (Aberdeen Region)

Corey Weerheim, Equipment Technician (Mitchell)

Doug Griesse, Road Design Engineer (Rapid City)

Kimberly Nagel, Senior Secretary (Winner)

Andrew Dickinson, Financial Program Specialist (Pierre)

Broc Swanson, Region Senior Bridge Supervisor (Rapid City)



Andrew Dickinson was treated to a "Finance Food Day Farewell" before making the move up to Project Development on 3rd floor!



Jack Dokken, completed the **State Rail Planning** meetings across the state the first week of March! He obviously earned a hat and pin for his good presentations!

Mike Roberts has taken the **HMW position in Highmore, Unit 192 / 193 shop**. Mike has experience working with Hyde County which will be beneficial to the DOT. Welcome & Good Luck Mike.



Ken Payne, Highway Maintenance Supervisor presented **Mike Kogel** with his 15 year pin. **Mike is the Lead Highway Maintenance Worker in Woonsocket.**

